and at least one hydrophilic alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent and/or at least one hydrophilic non-alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent; or

(b) a mixture comprising benzyl alcohol or polyphenol compounds and at least one non-alcoholic hydrophilic GRAS flavoring agent, the mixture containing no other GRAS flavor alcohols;

wherein said hydrophillic alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent is a monohydric or polyhydric alcohol containing from 2 to 10 carbon atoms, and said hydrophilic non-alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent is an organic acid containing from 1 to 15 carbon atoms or its physiologically acceptable salt, a hydrophilic acetate and/or a hydrophilic aldehyde.

Claims 2-23 previously canceled

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24. (Currently Amended) An antimicrobial composition comprising:

(a) a mixture free of polyphenol compounds and benzyl alcohol, said mixture comprising at least two generally recognized as safe flavoring agents and at least one hydrophilic non-alcoholic generally recognized as safe flavoring agent; or

(b) a mixture comprising a ~~an alcoholic~~ generally recognized as safe

flavoring agent selected from the group consisting of benzyl alcohol and polyphenol compounds, and at least one hydrophilic non-alcoholic generally recognized as safe flavoring agent;

wherein said hydrophilic, non-alcoholic, generally recognized as safe flavoring agent comprises an organic acid containing from 1 to 15 carbon atoms or physiologically acceptable salt thereof or hydrophilic acetate or hydrophilic aldehyde and (A) comprises at least two lipophilic alcoholic generally recognized as safe flavoring agents.

25. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24 wherein said organic acid contains 2 to 10 carbon atoms.

26. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 25 wherein said organic acid is selected from the group consisting of acetic acid, acontic acid, formic acid, malic acid, lactic acid, phenylacitic acid, citric acid, mandelic acid, tartaric acid, fumaric acid, tannic acid, hydrocinnamic acid and mixtures, thereof.

27. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24 wherein said physiologically acceptable salts contain from 2 to 10 carbon atoms and are derived from organic acids selected from the group consisting of acetic acid, acontic acid, formic acid, malic acid, lactic acid, phenylacitic acid, citric acid,

mandelic acid, tartaric acid, fumaric acid, tannic acid, hydrocinnamic acid and mixtures thereof.

28. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24 wherein the hydrophilic acetate is selected from the group consisting of allicin, triacetin, potassium acetate, sodium acetate, calcium acetate and mixtures thereof.

29. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24 wherein the hydrophilic aldehyde is selected from the group consisting of furfurol, propenic aldehyde and vanillin.

30. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24, wherein said lipophilic alcoholic generally recognized as safe flavoring agents are selected from the group consisting of n-butyl alcohol, iso-butyl alcohol, hexyl alcohol, L-menthol, octyl alcohol, cinnamyl alcohol, α-methylbenzyl, alcohol, heptyl alcohol, n-amyl alcohol, iso-amyl alcohol, anisic alcohol, citronellol, decyl alcohol, geraniol, β-γ-hexenol, lauryl alcohol, linalool, nerolidol, nonadienol, nonyl alcohol, rhodinol, terpineol, borneol, clineol, anisole, cuminyl alcohol, 10-un-decen-1-ol, 1-hexadecanol, or their derivatives.

31. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24, wherein mixture (A) additionally contains a hydrophilic alcohol generally recognized as safe flavoring agent which is an alcohol selected from the group consisting of 1-

propanol, glycerol, propylene glycol and acetoin.

32. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 24, wherein mixture (A) additionally contains generally recognized as safe flavoring agents selected from ~~(a) phenols ,(b) lipophilic esters, (c) terpenes, (d) acetals, (e) lipophilic aldehydes,~~ (f) essential oils~~, (g) lipophilic acids, and their derivatives~~.

33. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 32, which contains from 0.01% to 90% by weight, of generally recognized as safe flavoring agents ~~(a) to (g)~~.

34. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24, wherein the polyphenol compounds in mixture (B) are selected from the group consisting of pyrocatechol, resorcinol, hydroquinone, phloroglucinol, pyrogallol, hexahydroxybenzene, usnic acid, acylpolyphenols, lignins, anthocyans, flavones, catechols, gallic acid derivatives, caffeic acid, flavonoids, polyphenol derivatives, and extracts from Camellia, Primula.

35. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 34, wherein said mixture (B) contains additional generally recognized as safe flavoring agents selected from ~~(a) phenols ,(b) lipophilic esters, (c) terpenes, (d) acetals, (e) lipophilic aldehydes,~~ (f) essential oils~~, (g) lipophilic acids, and their

~~derivatives~~.

36. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 35, wherein said mixture (B) contains from 0.001% to 25% by weight, of said additional generally recognized as safe flavoring agents ~~(a) to (g)~~.

37. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24, wherein said composition consists of generally recognized as safe flavoring agents.

38. (Previously Added) The composition according to claim 24, wherein said composition additionally contains emulsifiers, stabilizers, antioxidants, preservatives, solvents and/or carriers.

39. (Previously Added) A method for improving the keeping quality of microbially perishable products, by adding to the said microbially perishable product an antimicrobial composition comprising:

(a) a mixture free of polyphenol compounds and benzyl alcohol, said mixture comprising at least two generally recognized as safe flavoring agents and at least one hydrophilic non-alcoholic generally recognized as safe flavoring agent; or

(b) a mixture comprising an alcoholic generally recognized as safe

flavoring agent selected from the group consisting of benzyl alcohol and polyphenol compounds, and at least one hydrophilic non-alcoholic generally recognized as safe flavoring agent;

wherein said hydrophilic, non-alcoholic, generally recognized as safe flavoring agent comprises an organic acid containing from 1 to 15 carbon atoms or physiologically acceptable salt thereof or hydrophilic acetate or hydrophilic aldehyde and (A) comprises at least two lipophilic alcoholic generally recognized as safe flavoring agents.

40. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 39, wherein said composition is added to said microbially perishable product in an amount of from 1 ppm to 10% by weight.

41. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 40 wherein said composition is added to said microbially perishable product in an amount of from 0.001% to 0.5% by weight.

42. (Previously Added) A method for improving the keeping quality of a microbially perishable product in which the surfaces of the product are treated with one or more processing aids comprising the antimicrobial compositions of claim 1.

43. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 42, wherein said processing aid is employed in an amount of from 0.01 to 5 g per kilogram of the product.

44. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 43 wherein the processing aid is employed in vaporized form in an amount of 0.01 g/m^2 to 10 g/m.

45. (Previously Added) A microbially perishable product containing the antimicrobial composition of claim 1.

III. REMARKS

In response to the Examiner's requirement for restriction of claims 32 and 35, Applicant's has elected subgenus (f) "essential oils" from subgenus (a) through (g) in these claims. Applicant disagrees with the requirement and asks that it be withdrawn because several of these subgenuses appear to be part of the same invention. As defined in the application, the term "essential oils" includes phenols, esters, terpenes and aldehydes, which are incorporated in paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of claims 32 and 35. See page 9, lines 3-18 of the application and definition of "essential oils". As the election of essential oils as the category of safe flavoring agents in claim 32 and 35 restores coverage to at least certain phenols, esters, terpenes and aldehydes, the restriction is meaningless. Accordingly, Applicant asks that the Examiner withdraw the requirement for restriction of claims 32 and 35.

Claims 33 and 36 are amended to remain consistent with the amendment to claims 32 and 25. Claim 24 was amended to correct a clerical error.